

598  
TO THE

Present Authority  
OF  
PARLIAMENT  
NOW SITTING,

And to all other Rulers and Officers belonging to this  
Nation of *England*, who now bears chiefeft Rule.

Some words of Reflection to you all, touching those  
who bear Rule before you, whom the Lord hath justly put down  
from their Seats, which words may be useful for so many of  
them as have escaped the hand of the Lord, as yet not  
to be utterly cut off, before he proceed any further  
against them.

But this chiefly to you who are the present Rulers  
put you in minde of their neglect of the cry of the  
Righteous; Also to your selves a Warning  
and true admonition.

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Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his foot-stool, for he is h  
ly, Psal. 99.5.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darknesse, and be  
fore your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look f  
Light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it grosse darknes  
Jer. 13. 16.

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Bryan Wilkinfon.

L O N D O N,  
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near Aldersgate, 1659.



THE former Parliaments and Rulers which were before you now of late years who were worldly wise men, and accounted by many, even the wisdom of the Nation, and these wise men the Lord God of heaven and earth, the great wise God who is Lord over all, yet not known nor comprehended by all the wisdom of the world, he unto them in the time of their sitting and Rule, did unto them send many faithful messengers, servants and Prophets, even righteous men rising up early: early did the Lord send unto them in the beginning of their times of sitting, and Rule, and reign, and by them these Rulers were often and faithfully warned time after time, in their times while they bear Rule; that they should Rule in righteousness, and call to mind their former engagements and promises which they made unto the Lord, and unto the honest hearted of the Nation, in their way of worship toward God without restraint, these things were often laid before them by divers of the Lords people called *Quakers*, from a feeling condition of the want of these things being fulfilled.

But these Rulers which were before you, they did not regard the true messages, but did sleight the Lords servants whom he did send unto them, though Gods witness in themselves did often let them see that their message was true, just, and equal; but their message being a crosse unto the wisdom of these Rulers who had lost the tenderness in which they promised (take good notice of that) their messages being a crosse unto their wisdom their worldly honours, and worldly interest, therefore instead of hearkening to the servants of the Lord, these Rulers rather hearkened unto the Teachers of the Nation, even the false Prophets who joyned with them for worldly interests; and so went from the witness of God in themselves unto the counsel of their own hearts, which were one with the false prophets without, so the wisdom of God became foolishness unto them, and so they broke Covenants with God and his people which formerly they had made.

Then began they to despise the Lords servants when they went from the reproof of the Lord in themselves; & so suffered them with the rest of the people of the Lord to be persecuted, beat and whipped & imprisoned, and their goods to be spoiled by the Priests of the Nation and others through unjust Popish laws, which was set up and made by Popish governors for the maintenance and guarding of Popish Priests and these laws persecuting Magistrates took hold of, and persecuted them which bore a true Testimony for the Lord, as they were moved by him, though formerly they had hazarded their lives with many of these Rulers who gave them thus up into the hands of wicked men, and so every one as they departed from iniquity

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iniquity, and bore a testimony for God, were unto this generation made a prey.

Nevertheless the threatnings, scoffings, and revilings, the Barbarous and cruel oppressions, hard yokes and heavy burdens, beatings, bruising, bloodshed, prisons, and persecutions which was inflicted upon us in this time of these Rulers neglect of true Justice, all this did not take away our confidence which we have in the Lord, but unto him was our cause and innocence committed, and he of us hath never been sought to in vain. I say in these times of our troubles the Lord was still our hope, and these Rulers was still warned, and our unjust sufferings laid often before them; but they did not lend their ear so as to take off these oppressions, but hardened their hearts, and encouraged the Lords enemies, and ours, and so strengthened the hands of evil doers against us, so that there was such cruel and horrible things committed in the Land upon us, as never was heard of amongst a people who professed Christianitie and declared against Idolatrie.

But the Lord being displeased with their hypocrisie, he broke these Counsellors one after another; for they took not Counsel at him, but against him, and hardened their hearts, and did not obey the voyce of the Lords messenges, who time after time did warn them as they were moved of the Lord; so the time of the Lords determination being finished, and the cry of the oppressed waxing loud in his ears, the Lord would no longer strive with them, but in his wrath he rose up against them, because they continued in Rebellion against him, and some of them he cut off, in his displeasure for turning from their righteousness, and many of them he hath brought to shame, which before they might have acted that, when they did bear rule, which God would have honoured them for, and their names might have been in memorial from generation to generation among the Lords people, and great things might have been done by them if their minds had been towards the Lord to have acted for him, and not against him, which would have crowned them with honour and not shame, and the hearts of the righteous would have rejoyced, and not have been made sad, and the work of the Lord they would have put their hands to, and not have been against it. But the work of the Lord must go on in this day of his power, and who can let it? for wo be unto him that striveth with his Maker, or against the Lord; for he is jealous of his Name, and none must be proud against him, for in this day of his power he will bring down the lofty from their seats, and the understanding of the prudent must come to nought.

But now to you who are the present Authoritie, that you in your time do not forget the Lord; for the time is come that every one must be tryed, and now are you set up again that you may be tryed, and now hath the Lord a great work in hand, and if you will stand up for him, he will be for you, and with you to keep you together; if you do not, he will be against you, and break you to pieces. But if you seek to honour him, then will he honour you, if you seek to set up yourselves, and the false Prophets who teaches for hire, and will not teach without a set maintenance, this is not right in the sight of the Lord; but he will ponder

your wayes and weigh you in his Balance, and you will be found wanting to do that which shall be for him; But on the contrary, that which is against him; for this thing will be abominable unto him, & you will be found doing that which is evil in the sight of the Lord, and the hand of the Lord will be against you for this thing more then it was against them which were before you, they being examples unto you made who comes after them, for these overturnings amongst you hath been by him who throws down one, & sets up another; But is now setting up of his own Son to reign, whose right it is, which makes the heathen to rage and the people to imagine vain things. But be ye instructed, and kisse the Son lest he be angry, before his wrath be kindled against you, in this his day, wherein many are offering gifts unto him, But *Cains* sacrifice will not be accepted, nor *Esaus* tears obtain the blessing again; Nor *Judas* repentance did at all avail when he had betrayed the blood of the innocent into the hands of the Priests and Elders.

Now if you say all this is true, but what is it to us we have no such thoughts to do as the other Rulers did before us, as to suffer any for conscience sake to be beat, whipped or imprisoned, or to have their goods spoiled, or to give up the innocent into the hands of wicked men. But the true work of the Lord is the thing which we aim at, and the exaltation of his Son that he alone may reign according to our former engagements and promises which we made unto him, if it were so then may it be said the Lord be with you, but if any of you draw back from this, the just God will have no pleasure in such, but his just hand will be against them; but so many of you as do desire to do that which may be right in the sight of the Lord, all self-ends, self-interests, prejudice, worldly honour, respect of persons, set aside, then to that of God in your selves turn in, which lets you see that you are but men, and this is the light which Christ Jesus hath enlightened you withall, which is spiritual, and you joyning with this it, will make you like it, and like him from whence it doth proceed, even Christ the power of God to every one who believes, and as you come to be like him, then will you 'do the will of God, and not your own, then will you cease from your own works, and do the work of the Lord; now if you say, what is the work of the Lord that we are to do in this day of his power, that he will have his Son to reign in? or what can we do, if he take the Government unto himself?

My answer is; that the work of the Lord in this day of his power is, that every one may be brought to be subject to his own power, the power of God, and this every one is to know in themselves which will keep in obedience unto him, as they keep unto it, and teach them how to exercise their consciences both towards God, and men; I say that this is the Lords work which he is begun to work. Now your work and your places is to cherish such and to be a praise unto them who doth thus witness the power of God in themselves, in whose hearts the righteous Law of God is set up which doth regulate their wayes and so teach them the exercise of a good conscience both towards God and towards man; and as you your selves are subject unto him who hath enlightened you with  
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his light, with it he will let you see who are from the power of God, and no otherwise you can see, and as you your selves are subject to the higher power, the power of God, then with the light you will see how to exercise your power among those, who are not subject to the higher power, and so be a terror to all evil doers.

Now Rulers are not a terror to good works, nor to them that do well, and this I can speak by experience, who have had a share of such sufferings among the Lords people now of late, who have suffered as evil doers, yet innocent, and doing no evil, but good, and so the power which is a terror to him that doth evil. We had praise of the same, though much we suffered by blind persecuting Magistrates, who were from the power of God, in themselves, and so turned the edge of the sword against the innocent, and deeply have many suffered now of late yeares, both in their bodies and estates by such blind persecuting Magistrates, that never knew the power of God in themselves, from which they should have acted, nor never knew the Powers that are ordained of God, but acted by their own wills, being many of them men of prejudiced spirits, and their ground from which they acted was from old popish Lawes which was made and set up by Popish Rulers, in the dark night of Apostacy, for binding and compelling, killing and destroying, yet thinking they did God service, and these Lawes were one with the dark principles of these Magistrates now of late, who thus did persecute without a cause, and so many of the Lords dear people, both in ages past, and now of latest yeares for conscience sake have suffered deeply by binding and compelling Lawes, because they could not pay and conform to such things as was required of them, and of such unjust sufferings we, who are by *Ishmaels* generation called *Quakers*, have had the deepest share in, and this you are not ignorant of; So now it lies upon you to remedy these things, for the Lord doth require it at your hands, for he hath looked down upon the afflictions of his people, and have beheld their grievous oppressions, and the time is come that the Lord will ease himselfe of his adversaries, and avenge himselfe of his enemies, who will not that he should reigne: Now all binding and compelling Lawes, touching the worship of God makes many hypocrites both to God and to men & this is plainly seen in these our daies, for many now who cannot give up themselves unto suffering, are miserably enslaved in themselves, because of binding and compulsive Lawes, and so remains under a condemned estate in bondage; and if hypocrites and unbelievers are to be turned into the lake, then what shall the portion of them be, who either makes Lawes or upholds lawes, which makes hypocrites? and if the losse of a mans soul be of more value then a whole world, then what or how shall they be able to answer the Lord, or to stand in judgement before him, who by such lawes doth compel men to sin against their owne consciences? so this doth lie upon you from the Lord, that you do break off every such a yoke, and that you neither make nor uphold such lawes, ordinances, acts, or what you may call them, as we have so deeply suffered by; Namely any law for payment of Tythes, or any law to limit the holy One in any kind what ever, particularly that none be hindred as they be moved of the Lord to speak the word of the Lord in any place or assembly.

bly of people, for in these two things, especially hath many Magistrates and Priests, who leaned upon them, been the cause of many unjust sufferings, though for their wicked covetousnesse the Lord hath smitten many of them both.

Now there is no question, but you who are the present authority, hath to do with this generation of men, the Priests who have been such persecutors of us, as the other Rulers had who were before you. Now I say unto you as from the Lord, that in his true fear you stand, and that you joyne not with them whom the Lord is against, who doth not profit the people at all, but doth cause them to err as the false prophets did, whom the Prophet *Jeremy* speaks against, *Jer. 23. 32.* Now the Priests of *England* are such, this is a true testimony against them, whether you can believe it or no; therefore be warned and take heed how you give your strength unto them, for if you give it unto them, you give it unto the harlot, for they who preach for hire and divine for mony, are adulterated from the Lord, yet they will lean upon the Lord, the Priests and false prophets who taught for hire, did so in the Prophet *Micahs* daies, *Mic. 3. 11.* the Priests of *England* doth so, they preach for hire, and saies, is not the Lord among them, But they lean upon the Rulers of *Eng.* for to compel people to hire them, and divers of them, have thrust themselves among a people, and have forced them in some places by orders which they have got from the Rulers of the Nation, or by some order from some other Priest above them, which he hath had from the Rulers, I say some of them have by compulsion, come in to a parish against the peoples minde, and when they are set down then from every house, and from every quarter of the parish, they begin to look for their gain, but such the prophet *Esey* calls blind watchmen, and greedy-dumbe dogs; and now these Priests who doth thus, they will say my Parish, and my people, when many of the people are against him, and some of these for conscience sake cannot goe to hear him at all, and yet of such he will look for gain from, is not here horrible things committed in the land, Priests preaching for hire, and bearing Rule by their meanes? but what will ye do, in the end saith the Lord.

Now if you say tithes were given by God, under the first priesthood, and why may they not stand now for Ministers maintenance? I answer, no; for who ever goes about to keep up Tythes under what pretence so ever, doth deny Christ come in the flesh, and so are the antichrists; for the Apostle to the *Hebrewes* sayth, *Heb. 7. 5.* that they who are of the sons of *Levi*, who receive the office of the Priesthood, have a commandement to take Tythes, and in the 12 verse he saith, the priesthod being changed there is made of necessity also a change of the Law, & in the 18. v. he saith verely there is a disanulling of the commandement going before; now the law being changed & the commandement disanuled which was for tithes which God commanded, how can any who owns the Apostles Doctrine, be subject to it, and deny the Apostles doctrine, and consequently Jesus Christ his coming in the flesh? who is the sume of all things before spoken of, who said unto those whom he sent forth, freely ye have received freely give, and those whom he hath sent forth, obeyed his voice, and when they

they returned again, they wanted nothing, and they were to go whither Christ sent them, and not to thrust themselves into places, nor to inquire after places, and get places where they could, or liked, and there to sit down for terme of life, or till they heard of another place, which would be more for their profit. O surely you cannot but see these things to be abominable, and much it is, that they themselves who would be accounted Gospel Ministers doth not blush to think of these things: But surely they are very impudent, for they have been sufficiently warned, and the truth plainly declared to them, and their false waies and practices truly declared against, for which they do account us to be their enemies, though nothing but the truth hath been spoken unto them.

And though you may count me so, for telling you the truth, yet whether you will hear or forbear, this is truth unto you, that if you go about to set up or to uphold such a Ministry or such a maintenance, or such a worship, as to make the old Masse-houses which the Papists built for their Idolatrous worship, and make them your chief places of worship, as the other Rulers did which were before you; assuredly the Lord will be against you for these things, and his presence will not be with you, for he expects far greater things from you now, then what you saw when you were chosen at the first of all, nor will the Lord suffer that to stand by you for which he hath thrown others out before you; for these old Masse-houses, falsely called Churches, the gleab land belonging them, the tythes which hath been laid to them, the augmentations, revenues, the bells that hangs in them, and other maintenance, dues, customes, and payments which are claimed as belonging them, besides many practices in their way of worship in them, are as truly seen now to be Idolatrous and contrary to the mind of God now in these daies, as ever the groves, the high places and the Idolatrous houses was in the daies of *Israel*, and they have been as truly cryed out against, as from the mind of the Lord, as ever the other was by the true prophets of God in that age.

So now be wise and be instructed ye Rulers of the Earth, that the mind of the Lord you may come to know, and take heed how you go about to limit the Lord in any kind what ever, for the Lord hath sought out, and hath found out many now who doth worship him in spirit and in truth, who neither can goe to one set place or another; But as the Lamb guides them who is the leader of them, whose voice they know and follow, and after none other can they goe, and such these Scriptures finds fulfilled, that God doth not dwell in Temples made with hands.

So to you who desire to do the Lords will, consult not with flesh and blood, but do what is in your hearts, for the Lord, & in the Lords counsell stand his will to know, even to that turn to, which discovers unto you the secrets of your hearts when you are alone, and shewes unto you them things to be evil which no man can accuse you of, and shewes you such a good way as you never yet walked in, there is some thing in you, shall find if you do but hearken, and lend your eare unto it, which will not flatter you in any thing, in that principle stay your minds, and from that principle do not goe, and then you will know a true voice in your selves, and by it you will know the true voice without. But if from this principle

ciple you go, then from the true voice you go in your selves, and so will yeild to the wrong voice without, which will lead you to set up that which the Lord is throwing down, which is all false waies & false worships & false worshipers, which God is against, and the Scriptures of truth doth declare against: So of the beastly power take you heed; for if you go about to uphold the false prophets who teaches for hire, and runne after the Lord never sent them, and so doth not profit the people at all, such as are persecutors, and are found in the steps of Scribes and Pharisees, your power will be no other but the beastly power, which makes war against the Lamb; But if you should do so, the Lamb will have the victory: But as you act from the spirit of God which is pure, you will love all men without respect of persons, and seek the peace and safety of all, as to their persons, and the overthrow of that which is evil in all; And as for Ministers and Teachers for the Nation, you need take no thought, for the Lord of the harvest Christ must send forth, and he will fit them for his own work without Schools of great learning, or made by the will of man, and no other can profit the people, but such as he sends forth.

B. W.

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THE END.

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